

lege or a health emergency or for a first-time home downpayment without any tax penalty, so that people can do more to save for their own college. If you save the money without tax payments and you can get a deduction for investing it, we will literally never tax the money people save for their own college education or their children's college education. It would be the best investment this country ever made. And we can do it and still balance the budget in the right way. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

Folks, I look at this community, I look at this school, I remember everything I've read about it. I saw that Air Force colonel bragging on you. I know you sent student volunteers to work in the White House. I think of all the things you have done and built here, and it looks to me like a pretty good picture of what America ought to be like as we start the 21st century.

And I say to you that 7 weeks from today, the American people will elect the last President of the 20th century and the first President of the 21st century. But far more important, the American people will decide whether we're going to be a country that says, "It takes a village to raise a child and a community to build a school," or "You're on your own," whether we're going to be a country that says, "We should try to build a bridge to a distant past," or a "No, thank you, we're going to build a bridge to a bright, new future."

If you want to build a bridge to that bright, new future, if you want us all to go over it together, if you believe we have an obligation to help one another make the most of our own lives and you like where we've come from compared to where we were, I hope that you will stand fast for education, for opportunity for every single American and for working to build that bridge that we can all walk across together because our best days are still ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:56 p.m. at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Robert E. Bailey, USAF, Vice Commander, 928th Airlift Wing; Laura Murray, superintendent, Homewood-Flossmoor Community School District; Anthony

Moriarty, principal, Homewood-Flossmoor High School; and Ronald Blackstone, president, Homewood-Flossmoor Community Board of Education.

Proclamation 6917—Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1996

September 17, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

At a time when many nations around the world are becoming ever more factionalized, the citizens of the United States are blessed with an overarching identity as Americans. The wisdom of our Nation's founders, as embodied in our Constitution, still binds us in a united community of purpose and ideals. Our Constitution invites us all to recognize ourselves as Americans first—not to de-emphasize our personal or familial roots, but to celebrate the diversity that adds strength to our national character. As Daniel Webster put it more than a century ago, we share "One country, one constitution, one destiny."

This week we celebrate the Constitution of the United States of America. This remarkably flexible document has stood for more than two centuries as a unique achievement in the world of nations. The more we study and understand the Constitution, the more we grow, mature, and blossom as citizens. This process links us to the Nation's founders by making us part of their great adventure in democracy. By living our daily lives according to the founders' principles, we keep alive their vision and demonstrate its truth and wisdom.

In order to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, immigrants undertake a formal study of the guiding principles and institutions of American government. Those who choose to become citizens proudly welcome this responsibility. In fact, all of us would do well to emulate the zeal and interest shown by these newest Americans, who deeply appreciate their bond with the noble tradition of our Constitution. Therefore, on this occasion I call upon all Americans to consider the wonderful blessings of their United States citizenship and to look upon our Constitution

and celebrate the freedom and protection that it has always afforded us.

In commemoration of the signing of our Constitution and in recognition of the importance of informed, responsible citizenship, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 159), requested the President to proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1996, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1996, as Constitution Week, and urge all Americans to join in observing these occasions with appropriate programs and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:22 a.m., September 18, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 19.

Letter to Speaker Newt Gingrich on Legislation Prohibiting Possession of Firearms by Domestic Violence Offenders

September 17, 1996

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am pleased that you have now joined me in supporting legislation to prohibit domestic violence offenders from obtaining firearms. No one who has committed an act of domestic violence against a spouse or child should be able to possess a firearm.

As you know, Senator Lautenberg and Representative Torricelli have introduced legislation that would achieve this objective. The Senate passed the Lautenberg bill for the second time last week by an overwhelm-

ing and bipartisan vote of 97-2. It is now time for the House to act on the Torricelli bill and join the Senate in supporting this bipartisan effort.

There were 88,500 incidents of domestic violence where a firearm was present in 1994. I signed the Brady Law in 1993 and to date it has prevented over 60,000 felons, fugitives and others from buying handguns. My 1994 Crime Bill included the historic Violence Against Women Act, which made it a crime for stalkers and harassers under restraining orders to carry a gun. That provision is beginning to take hold—in Kentucky alone, over 300 stalkers and harassers were prohibited from buying firearms in one year. The legislation that you now support will build upon these important provisions.

I welcome your support and determination to complete this job. Protecting innocent women and children from deadly domestic violence is too important to let anything stand in the way. Bringing this bill to a vote in the House is an important step. But we must see it through to the end. Send it to me for my signature without further delay before Congress adjourns so that keeping guns out of the hands of all domestic violence offenders becomes the law of the land.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 18.

Remarks Announcing the Establishment of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument at Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

September 18, 1996

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for being here and for being in such good spirits. Thank you, God, for letting the Sun come out. This is a sunny day—we ought to have a sunny day for a sunny day.

Thank you, Rob Arnberger, for the work you do here at Grand Canyon National Park and for your participation; to all of our distinguished guests. I want to say a special word